

## **Minutes of Doncaster & Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals'**

### **Annual Members Meeting**

**Pre-recorded for broadcast at 6pm on Thursday 26 September 2024**

#### **Welcome**

The Chair of the Board welcomed viewers to the Trust's virtual Annual Members Meeting. The meeting would summarise the Trust's achievements during the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

#### **Minutes of the Annual Members Meeting held on 28 September 2023**

The Chair of the Board asked members to note that the minutes of the previous Annual Members Meeting held on 28 September 2023 had been approved as a true record at the Council of Governors meeting on 9 November 2023, a copy of which could be found on the Trust's website <https://www.dbth.nhs.uk/about-us/become-a-member/annual-members-meeting/>.

#### **Reflection on 2023/24 – Suzy Brain England OBE, Chair of the Board and Council of Governors**

The Chair of the Board reflected on 2023/24 and shared her appreciation of colleagues' dedication and efforts, which had been pivotal in supporting the Trust's commitment to delivery of outstanding healthcare.

In the last year, the Trust had made significant progress in enhancing services and improving patient outcomes. Facilities at all three hospital sites had been upgraded to meet the evolving needs of patients, including the refurbishment of medical imaging at Bassetlaw Hospital and a charity funded bereavement suite at Doncaster Royal Infirmary. At Montagu Hospital, the Mexborough Elective Orthopaedic Centre of Excellence and Community Diagnostic Centre had set new standards in specialist care and diagnostics, demonstrating the value of collaborative partnership working.

During 2023/24 the Trust had welcomed Deputy Chief Executive, Zara Jones and Chief Information Officer, Dan Howard. Their fresh perspectives would help to shape the Trust's strategic and digital vision for the future. Specialist roles and services were also introduced, including the Early Pregnancy Loss Midwife and the Rapid Diagnostic Service.

The Trust had celebrated the success of its colleagues, with the Estates & Facilities Team securing Team of the Year at the Building Better Healthcare Awards.

The Trust had delivered its 2023/24 financial plan and a record breaking £57.6m of capital investment, which included the Bassetlaw Emergency Village, and the refurbishment of the

Central Delivery Suite at Doncaster Royal Infirmary.

The launch of the DBTH Way was recognised as a significant milestone in shaping the culture of the organisation, the framework emphasised kindness, inclusivity, and collaboration, setting clear expectations of how colleagues should treat each other and patients.

The Trust had launched its health inequalities strategy, led by Dr Kelly MacKenzie and Richard Woodhouse, which was being embedded into Trust activities. Innovation was central to developments, and with the support of the Fred and Ann Green legacy there had been investment in advanced technology, the da Vinci® robot for minimally invasive surgery and a therapy suite for stroke rehabilitation.

Sustainability and net zero ambitions were guiding the Trust's actions and the Trust's Green Plan had achieved significant results, including a transition to renewable electricity and reducing volatile anaesthetic gases.

There had been transformational progress during 2023/24 and the Trust was well placed to deliver exceptional healthcare for all.

The Chair of the Board expressed her thanks to colleagues, governors, members, volunteers, partner organisations and local communities for their support.

#### **Reflection on 2023/24 - Richard Parker OBE, Chief Executive**

The Chair of the Board welcomed the Chief Executive, Richard Parker to the virtual Annual Members meeting.

The Chief Executive recognised the challenges faced by the NHS in 2023/24 at a local and national level, with a focus on returning to pre pandemic activity levels and recovery of the waiting lists.

The workforce was a critical factor in this period of recovery, which had been impacted by significant levels of industrial action and the efforts of colleagues in maintaining a safe service throughout this time was acknowledged. The Chief Executive welcomed the pay settlement and encouraged a speedy resolution for the outstanding general practitioner negotiations.

Where there had been a need to source temporary workforce, this had been subject to careful management, significant financial pressures continued to be seen in 2024/25 across the NHS and in the economy.

During 2023/24 the Trust had cared for 131,000 inpatients, 511,000 outpatients, 199,000 visits to the emergency department and delivered 4,572 babies.

In March 2024, the Trust had met the national standard for patients being seen, treated, discharged, or admitted within four hours of arrival in the Emergency Department and were one of the most improved hospitals in the country. The Chief Executive encouraged the public to use the emergency services wisely, making the most appropriate choice for non-emergency or minor illnesses from the range of available healthcare services.

There had been sustained performance in respect of cancer standards, with a reduction in the 62 day backlog and delivery of the faster diagnosis standard. The 62 day referral to treatment

standard remained a challenge but the Trust continued to drive to achieve all standards in a sustainable way.

Efforts to drive down elective waits continued towards no patient waiting more than 52 weeks by the end of the year, which was recognised as a challenging standard locally and nationally.

There had been a greater focus on collaborative working to ensure consistent delivery of standards. System developments in elective, diagnostic and care in the community services were a key focus. The Mexborough Elective Orthopaedic Centre and the South Yorkshire & Bassetlaw Pathology Partnership were recognised as good examples of organisations working together to provide the best possible care to the communities served and with the support of technological advancement. Future opportunities to collaborate on the delivery of children's services were being explored and the Trust was engaged in a programme of work to implement an electronic patient record.

There had been considerable progress made in the year relating to patient experience with improved results on CQC inpatient and outpatient surveys.

In 2023/24 the Trust delivered its financial plan, with an improvement of 11.5% against its planned deficit, an extensive capital plan was delivered and in view of the disappointing news that the Trust was not part of the New Hospital Programme the Trust continued to explore opportunities to enhance its existing services and facilities. The support of local MPs was actively sought and appreciated and the work remained a significant commitment of the Board of Directors.

The Trust had reassessed its key priorities as part of a refresh of its strategy, focused on, patients, people, partnerships, and pounds. The Trust had launched a Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals Quality Strategy, implemented the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework, launched the Sexual Safety Charter and updated many of its policies.

From a quality perspective, improvement had been seen in hospital mortality rates, job planning and the introduction of a Health Inequalities Strategy. Disappointingly, following an inspection by the Care Quality Commission in September 2023 the overall rating of the Trust reduced from "Good" to "Requires Improvement". The Trust was committed to improve the areas identified and a robust plan of action was in place to ensure the rating returns to the national standards as quickly as possible following the introduction of the new inspection framework.

During the year senior posts had been recruited to across the organisation, with advances made in the recruitment of nursing colleagues and significant recruitment of midwives. The DBTH Way provided a framework for colleagues to role model behaviours in line with the Trust's We Care values, alongside a focus on Just Culture.

The Staff Survey secured a 67% participation rate, one of the highest in the country, which provided reliable data with which to work. 71% of responses were better than the national average and further actions would be taken to continue to improve colleagues experience. Of the nine national people promises the Trust was above the standard in all categories.

In terms of awards and accreditations, the Trust was delighted to have been named Employer of the Year at the Doncaster Chamber Business Awards, achieved menopause accreditation and many other nominations for local and national awards. The recognition of long service was reintroduced this year and was much appreciated by colleagues, with many colleagues having

service between 20-50+ years.

The significant investment from the Fred and Ann Green legacy to purchase the da Vinci® robot was acknowledged and the Chief Executive placed on record his thanks to Fred and Ann Green and their family for the enormous impact of the legacy for the Trust, its people, patients and community. The Chief Executive signalled the Trust's continuing commitment to provide high quality to patients.

#### **Annual Accounts 2023/24**

The Chair of the Board welcomed the Chief Financial Officer to the meeting to provide an overview of the Trust's financial performance.

2023/24's accounts had been audited by Ernst & Young and an unqualified opinion on the financial statements and use of resources had been provided.

The Chief Financial Officer confirmed that the Trust had moved away from the national financial regime in place throughout the pandemic, to earn money for the work completed. In 2023/24 the Trust had earned £568m of income, after paying colleagues and allowing for all in year liabilities the Trust reported a loss of £23.7m, against an agreed deficit plan of £26.8m.

As at 31 March 2024, the cash balance was £36.3m, however, due to a back loaded capital programme there was a total of £24m of capital creditors at year end, which meant the underlying cash position was c. £12m. The Trust continued to pay suppliers promptly to maintain cash flow in the economy.

There was a significant capital spend in year and the Trust experienced increased costs arising from increased utility prices and inflation. The Trust had however reduced its reliance on temporary staffing.

Looking ahead to 2024/25, the NHS would continue to face the challenge to improve waiting times and recover the backlog of elective patients.

The Trust had an agreed deficit plan of £26.7m, with cash support provided by NHS England. There remained a commitment to spend on essential estates maintenance, with an increased spend on medical equipment and IT as compared to 2022/23. An options appraisal for appropriate use of contingency was underway.

The Trust Board was focused on providing the best value for money for colleagues and patients and was working through a plan for a break even position over the medium term.

#### **Question and Answer Session**

The Chair of the Board introduced the question and answer session, where executive colleagues provided a response to members questions received prior to the meeting.

#### **"Given the current state of DBTH's finances, how will this affect plans to refurbish DRI, as well as ongoing maintenance costs?"**

The Chief Financial Officer confirmed that the Trust was currently working with colleagues at NHS England and the Department of Health & Social Care to review plans for the Doncaster Royal Infirmary site. A business case to refurbish the East Ward Block was being developed, with submission expected in Summer 2025. In the interim a number of schemes were being worked

up to support enabling programmes of work, including potential changes to staff accommodation, car parking and relocation of the Department of Critical Care.

**“How is the Trust tackling issues around diversity and representation?”**

The Chief People Officer confirmed there was a comprehensive improvement action plan in place to address equality, diversity and inclusion, aligned to the national NHS actions. This work was reported through the Board’s People Committee. Some of the work related to representation and diversity included an established Reciprocal Mentoring Programme and Board Development Delegate Programme to increase diversity in the talent pathway for both internal and external colleagues. Delegates were able to observe the Board and its committees, to understand ways of working and spend time with Board members. A leadership prospectus had been reframed in line with the DBTH Way and a talent management framework, Scope for Growth, had been introduced. Information from national data sets around equality and diversity and staff survey measures had been analysed to understand the impact of the work on our people.

**“What type of workforce challenges is the Trust currently experiencing?”**

The Chief People Officer confirmed that the Trust had a robust workforce planning process in place, aligned with business planning. There had been some recruitment successes this year, particularly in nursing and midwifery, including newly qualified and internationally educated colleagues. As a result, a reduction in agency and temporary staffing spend had been seen. There remained some areas of national challenge in medical workforce and the Trust continued to work closely with other organisations across the system to establish collaborative opportunities, the Pathology Network was a good example of this. In respect of retention rates, an improvement had been seen linked to the significant work underpinning the People Strategy. The Trust had well established relationships with external education providers where there were lots of opportunities to develop skills through a range of educational pathways and career development across all professions, including a range of apprenticeships.

**“The Trust is forecasting a higher deficit than expected – how does the Trust intend to manage this?”**

Following an overspend in the first two months of 2024/25, the Chief Financial Officer confirmed that the Finance and Performance Committee of Board had agreed a review to establish the cause. Should no change be initiated, the potential year end deficit was forecast to be c.£52m. Working with colleagues in divisions and directorates actions were identified to bring the finances back in line with the original financial plan.

The Chair of the Board thanked Trust members for their questions and shared her appreciation with executive colleagues for their responses.

**Annual Report & Accounts 2023/24**

The Chair asked that the Annual Report and Accounts for 2023/24, the annual audit letter and the Trust’s Constitution be received. Copies of which could be found on the Trusts website at [www.dbth.nhs.uk](http://www.dbth.nhs.uk)

In closing, the Chair of the Board thanked all viewers.

These were exciting times for the Trust, with opportunities for investment and development, however, the financial challenges faced by the NHS were acknowledged and it was imperative that public money was spent wisely with a commitment to deliver the best possible care for our patients.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Suzy Brain' followed by a stylized flourish.

**Suzy Brain England OBE**

Chair of the Board

7 November 2024